



WELCOME TO PERFORMANCE POWER ... THE NUTRITION CONNECTION!

As the military moves into the 21st century, we must look at ways to maximize training and combat effectiveness with a smaller force. To maintain the highest level of preparedness, the military must make the best use of equipment and troops. Equipment must be state-of-the-art, well-maintained and thoroughly tested. Troops must be top-notch, healthy, and rigorously trained. Diet plays an essential role in sustaining health, maintaining and enhancing mental performance, and improving physical capabilities. To be physically fit, troops must be nutritionally fit.

Diet plays an important role in supporting regular training for strength and endurance. Optimal nutrition can enable troops to train at maximal effectiveness. Loss of military efficiency and operational fitness can occur from poor dietary habits. Nutrition can enhance sustainability and survivability. A nutritional casualty can easily become a training or combat casualty.

There is clear evidence of a relationship between certain dietary behaviors and 6 of the 10 leading causes of death. Many Americans, including servicemembers, do not have the type of diet that can aid in the prevention of heart disease, arteriosclerosis, stroke, some cancers, diabetes, obesity, and low-birthweight infants. Good nutrition can impact your health and well-being now and far into the future.

Nutrition education is vital to the physical fitness program. It is critical that you understand why nutrition is important for performance and health and what the basic nutrition principles are. Only when you understand why, does nutrition training become effective.

The purpose of the Performance Power Nutrition Program is to communicate sports nutrition information so that you can make the dietary changes that will help you perform better and live healthier. This program supports the Department of Defense health promotion program to improve and maintain military readiness and the quality of life. The ideas presented in the program reinforce the need for physically-active people to eat foods high in carbohydrate and low in fat. It also presents some practical strategies to encourage you to make the transition from the high-fat diet typical of many servicemembers to the high-carbohydrate diet that is essential for optimal performance, weight control, and health.

Module 1 of the program contains facts and suggestions that will help you introduce the scientific basis of sports nutrition and what classes of nutrients are important for a good diet. Module 2 presents the basic concepts of a balanced diet. Module 3 builds upon this nutritional knowledge base by providing more practical strategies for implementing the performance nutrition principles. Module 4 focuses on the vital role of water for performance. The information in module 5 should help you understand that eating foods that are good sources of carbohydrate, protein, vitamins and minerals should take priority over expensive supplements. Module 6 discusses the importance of food and fluids in withstanding the rigors of field operations.